

Commanding *Constantia* in Senecan Tragedy

CHRISTOPHER STAR

Middlebury College

SUMMARY: This paper investigates the language of self-address in Seneca's tragedies. I show that the rhetorical language Seneca's characters direct at themselves constitutes a key similarity to the techniques Seneca recommends in his philosophical works. Initially, I demonstrate how Seneca urges Lucilius and even instructs the Emperor Nero (if only indirectly) to battle for consistency through self-command. Secondly, through careful explication of passages from *Agamemnon*, *Thyestes*, and *Medea*, I show how this same rhetorical figure, self-apostrophe, is used by Seneca's characters to achieve their criminal self-fulfillment. In Senecan tragedy as well as philosophy, consistency is achieved by self-command regardless of whether consistency results in knowledge for Lucilius, clemency for Nero, or revenge for Seneca's tragic characters.

THE CHARACTERS IN SENECA'S TRAGEDIES TALK TO THEMSELVES. This habit is not unique to Seneca; self-apostrophe can be traced back to Homeric epic.¹ Yet, Senecan characters address themselves, their *animus*, or their passions with a frequency that has often attracted the comments of scholars.² Analyses of Senecan tragic self-address, however, have been lacking. In this paper I investigate the language of self-address in Seneca's tragedies and focus on

¹ Discussions of self-address and self-identity in Greek literature are numerous; e.g. Shadewaldt on Greek drama; Sharples on Homer; de Romilly; Padel 1992 especially 38–41; 45–7; Dickey 186–7 provides a brief history of addresses to *psyche* and *thumos*; Gill 1996 gives a ground-breaking critique of and re-evaluation of our understanding of the Greek concept of self; see esp. 182–90 on self-address in Greek epic and tragedy. Studies of self-address in Seneca perhaps have been dampened by Leo's 106 judgment that Seneca mindlessly repeats this figure, having learned it from Euripides.

² Apostrophes to the *animus*, which will be the main focus of our study, occur twenty-five times in Seneca's tragedies as Viansino 370 points out; cf. Tarrant 1976: 194–5 ad Ag. 108f.

Agamemnon, *Thyestes* and *Medea*, in particular. I argue that the rhetorical language these characters direct at themselves has explicit connections to Seneca's philosophy. As they plot and carry out their revenge, the language of self-address becomes the means by which Seneca's characters fashion themselves, battle against psychological fluctuation and strive to achieve consistency of mind and action. Seneca's tragedies provide an extended look at the language of the self and an important pendant to the ideas of human psychology, action, and self-command presented in his philosophy. These tragedies do not simply portray the passions; Clytemestra, Aegisthus, Atreus and Medea do not passively describe and declaim the effects of the passions and their resulting psychological turmoil. Rather, in order to act, they all must command their *animus* and maintain their passions. The performance of their crimes of revenge is the result of a controlled and consistent process of self-monitoring and shaping. These tragedies function in terms of the Stoic dichotomy between the ideal good of consistency of action and mind (*constantia*) and the psychological fluctuation and inconsistency that afflicts humanity. Seneca's tragic characters are battling for *constantia*. They work to gain this paradoxical and contradictory form of consistency and criminal self-fulfillment through the language, specifically the *commands*, they direct at themselves. The focus of this paper is on Seneca's characters' imperatival method for battling psychological fluctuation (*fluctuatio animi*). For Seneca, creation and maintenance of a consistent self are intensely rhetorical and based around the repetition of the figure of self-apostrophe and command.³

³ This paper is concerned with self-command in Senecan tragedy as part of what M. Foucault identifies as the "arts of existence" or "techniques of the self" in Classical and Hellenistic philosophy. Foucault 1985: 10–11, defines these techniques as "intentional and voluntary actions by which men not only set themselves rules of conduct but also seek to transform themselves, to change themselves in their singular being, and to make their life into an *oeuvre* that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria." As Foucault 1986: 46, demonstrates "taking care of one's soul" achieved a particular fullness in the philosophy of Seneca; cf. 1986: 48–68 for a general discussion of *askesis* in Seneca and elsewhere. My focus will be on the relationship between self-address, self-control/creation and the passions that exists in both Seneca's philosophy and tragedy; cf. *Ep.* 82 for a critique of traditional Stoic means to eradicate the fear of death, and *Ep.* 94 on the importance of precepts and *sententiae*. The linguistic basis of self-construction is of course not unique to Seneca. Gill 1996: 183, for example, argues that Greek self-address is ultimately based on the norms of communication in society and of interpersonal dialogue. According to Gill characters such as Medea address themselves only because of their exceptional isolation. In his analysis of the development of the modern concept of self, Taylor 183 also notes the importance of language: "The self is both made and explored with words; and the best for both are the words spoken in the dialogue of friendship. In default of that, the

This linguistic mode of self-command and construction is found in Seneca's tragedies and throughout his philosophical works. The form and content of Seneca's tragic characters' self-address can not only be tied directly to his theory of personality shaping, but also to his philosophical *exempla*. Seneca's Cato, the paragon of Stoic virtue, as well as his Medea, Atreus, and his passion-driven villains speak to themselves in the same way. In his philosophy, Seneca urges his readers to struggle for consistency of action and *animus* and "to play one role" (*Ep.* 120.22). In his tragedies, Seneca presents his characters following this advice. Yet, Seneca's portrayal of the passions, and the explicit thematic connections this portrayal has to his philosophy, brings a serious challenge to, if not an outright contradiction and denial of, Stoic ideas of the passions and the psychology of vice. Rather than working toward virtue and true Stoic consistency, Seneca's tragic characters are working toward a consistently vicious and passion-driven self. According to the Stoic analysis, the passions represent the paradigm of inconsistency; they cause mental fluctuation and destroy self-control. In his tragedies, however, Seneca's characters take the Stoic ideal of *constantia* and self-command, one of the philosophy's key therapeutic means of battling the passions, and apply these ideas towards their own unstoic goal of revenge. From this very application, Seneca's characters develop a contradictory ideal of a consistency of passions and vice.

It may seem that Seneca has either lost control of, or is unconcerned with, Stoic ideas in his tragedies or that his two bodies of work, philosophy and tragedy, contain essential contradictions that cannot be reconciled. Yet, the tragedies are directly concerned with basic Stoic beliefs about the moral dichotomy between consistency and *fluctiatio animi*, self-command and the passions. Seneca's characters take the Stoic system and apply it to their desire for revenge in such a methodical, calculated and self-conscious way as to make it clear that the structure of the system itself is under investigation. The characters' continual use and abuse of Seneca's theory suggests that reading his tragedies and philosophy in tandem reveals a holistic portrait of human psychology. We see the full nature of the passions, vice, inconsistency, virtue, control, and *constantia*, as well as the hidden relationships between them. These apparent oppositions exist in a dialectical relationship, and through the figure of self-apostrophe, Seneca mediates key Stoic dichotomies. Moreover, Seneca's tragedies offer a means to explain the anomaly of the passions,

debate with solitary self comes limping far behind." The key difference with Seneca is the specific nature of the language of the self. Seneca is concerned with this "limping" and solitary form of self-construction and exploration. It is not based around an interpersonal dialogue. For Seneca the language of the self is *imperativ*al.

and instead of portraying the passions as foreign and inexplicable, he shows that the Stoic consistency of virtue can be linked to the inconsistency of the passions. These opposites exist together and mutually constitute each other.⁴ Indeed, his villainous characters are formed through their repeated and deliberate application of Stoic ideas to their seemingly dissonant and fluctuating actions. This use of Stoicism to achieve unstoic goals places the tragic characters squarely within the Stoic paradigm. The success of their revenge is dependant upon, and cannot escape Stoicism.

This criminal application of Stoicism also reveals a horrifying danger that lies at the core of Seneca's theory of self-command. As the Stoics argue, the passions are intimately related to reason and intention, spring from *voluntas* and judgment, and can thus be quelled by the application of reason.⁵ In his tragedies, Seneca isolates and reveals the rational and intentional element inherent in the passions; he shows that it is possible to create a consistently vicious character by manipulating and "misapplying" Stoic ideas. Self-control and consistency lie at the core of the performance of criminal acts. The control that the characters are able to exert over their passions brings out some of the darker, and unspoken, implications of the famous Stoic paradox of the relationship of the passions to reason and judgment.⁶ Seneca's tragedies present the problem of an agent wanting to maintain his *ira* once he feels it fading. Be it for a variety of reasons, such as self-image, self-creation, or an overriding desire for revenge, how would one deal with the fact that the passions are by their very nature changeable and short-lived?⁷ Is a consistency of vice and passion possible, despite the claims of Stoic doctrine to the contrary? The answer, Seneca's tragedies reveal, is yes. The means of obtaining this goal are ironically contained within Stoicism itself. These tragedies reveal that the passions, the paradigm of inconsistency and fluctuation, are built upon and maintained by an element of rational and consistent control. The rhetoric of self-command and control that is involved with his characters' villainous actions reveals a link between the performance of vice and virtue, passion-driven action, and Stoic *constantia*. The oppositions of *constantia* and inconsistency, vice and virtue do not lie as comfortably distant as we would like to believe. The focus of this paper is on how the gulf between rational

⁴ These ideas are based on Turner's theories of the relationship between structure and antistructure, esp. 49, 97.

⁵ Cf. *De ira* 2.3; 2.4; Gill 1983: 138–9; Inwood 1993: 181.

⁶ Gill 1983: 138–142 and Nussbaum 1994: 379 on Chrysippus; Inwood 1993: 165–181 on Seneca's developments in *De ira*; cf. also Plutarch *Mor.* 446f–7a = *SVF* 3.459.

⁷ Cf. *De ira* 1.8; 1.17, discussed by Tarrant 1976: 194, *ad Ag.* 108f.; as Seneca says, "delay is the greatest remedy for anger," *De ira* 2.29.

Stoic control and the inconstant fluctuation of the passions is mediated and elided by Seneca's characters.⁸ I argue for a direct and ultimately dialogical relationship and engagement between Seneca's philosophy and tragedy. In fact, the assumptions and ideals about character formation, psychology, and action in each body of work challenge each other.⁹

In order to understand fully Seneca's concept of *constantia*, and its opposite, *fluctuatio*, as well as the importance of self-construction through language, we must first turn to Seneca's philosophy. In particular, *Epistle* 120 reveals Seneca's ideas of the relationships between self, psychology, performance, and language. In this letter, Seneca advocates the orthodox Stoic goal of "living consistently," defining it as a consistency (*constantia*) and concord (*concordia*) of psychology and action.¹⁰ *Epistle* 120 describes the ideal state of the

⁸ Seneca's portrayal of the passions in his tragedies does, on one level, contradict the orthodox Stoic notion that the passions reject planning and control. On the Stoic dichotomy between the passions and control, see Nussbaum 1994: 397; also Gill 1983: 143, on Chrysippus' definition of the passions as an "excessive impulse." Chrysippus compares the passions to a runner whose legs are out of control. Seneca intensifies this basic comparison and likens the irrevocable and out-of-control effect of the passions on the *animus* to falling off a cliff, *De ira* 1.7. Out of the tragedies' initially unorthodox portrait, Seneca develops a nuanced idea of the structure and maintenance of the passions that is ultimately based on Stoic theories of therapy. Cf. Gill 1997: 227–8 on the fundamental humanity, virtue and rationality that lie at the core of Phaedra's and Medea's passions. Seneca's tragedies' portrayal of consistency in vice and of criminal self-control are important precedents for modern literary and philosophical discussions; cf. Mele 1992: 289 on the links between *akrasia* and self-control; Shattuck 229–99 on the Marquis de Sade.

⁹ The nature of the relationship between Senecan philosophy and tragedy remains one of the most vexed questions in Senecan criticism. Dingel 14, 18, argues that the two must remain separated. He claims that the tragedies must be understood as strictly "poetisch" and may even "negate" Stoic principles; Dingel 58 claims that Seneca consciously tried to distance himself not only from his own tragic output, but also the entire genre. Cf. also Armisen-Marchetti 347–365, on the difficulties inherent in linking the two bodies of work. In a series of works, Schiesaro also argues for a critical separation of the two genres; Schiesaro 1994: 196–210, argues most forcefully for separation; Schiesaro 1997: 89–111, takes a more sympathetic view of philosophical readings of the tragedies; most recently Schiesaro 2003: 6, argues against political and moralistic interpretations of Atreus. Perhaps the most forceful arguments for a Stoic reading of Senecan tragedy come in Nussbaum 1993: 148 (critiqued by Schiesaro 1997: 108–9) and 1994, esp. 448–53 where Nussbaum connects *Medea* explicitly to the Stoic theory of the passions.

¹⁰ On the Old Stoic goal of life formulated by Zeno as "living consistently [with nature]," see Inwood 1985: 105: "The goal of life according to the Stoics is described in a variety of ways, but the dominant formulation involves the concept of consistency (*homologia*). 'A smooth flow of life' and 'living consistently' are descriptions of what the ideal life should be, and were current from the time of Zeno on"; for discussions of the possible mean-

sapiens and concludes with an equally vivid analysis of how distant the rest of humanity is from this goal. Seneca begins *Epistle* 120 with a response to Lucilius's desire to learn "how the notion of the good and virtue has come to us" (*quomodo ad nos boni honestique notitia pervenerit* 120.1 cf. 4).¹¹ Seneca claims that nature does not grant us this knowledge; rather it is something that we ourselves have to learn by analogy (120.4). We gain knowledge about virtue by watching and observing people. Seneca places Lucilius in the role of spectator scrutinizing those he sees, looking beneath the surface of their deeds to discover the origins of their actions and the state of their psychology.¹² Lucilius is instructed to look for psychological concord and consistency of action. Of course, Seneca is not suggesting to Lucilius that he can readily go out and observe perfection of self-consistency. At the end of the letter Seneca makes it clear that the ideal of "always being the same" (120.12) in action and *animus* characterizes the Stoic wise man (cf. 120.22). As Seneca soon reveals, humanity is plagued by psychological fluctuation (*mentis fluctuatio*) and a continual instability (*adsidua iactatio* 120.20).¹³ In his first description, Seneca

ings of this dictum, see Striker and more recently Schofield 239–46. In my discussion of Senecan philosophy I make considerable use of *Ep.* 120, for its succinct description of *homologia*, vivid theatrical metaphor for describing the inconstancy of humanity and, most importantly, Seneca's advice to Lucilius on how to work towards *constantia*. Other important discussions of the virtue of consistency include *Ep.* 52.1–2; 66.9, 13; 67.10; 74.30–4; 92.3. Elsewhere, Seneca describes Stoic virtue as *concordia animi*, e.g. *De vita beata* 9.4. On the links between the Stoic ideal of *constantia* and Seneca's tragedies, see Tietze. Tietze 141 concludes that Seneca's characters are "*characterismoi of inconstantia*"; my focus, however, is on the characters' ability successfully to battle *inconstantia*. Cf. also Motto 79–87.

¹¹ Seneca's *Epistles* and *Dialogues* are from Reynolds 1977, 1965; translations are my own.

¹² The opening of *Ep.* 120 contains an important contribution to Seneca's overall analysis of psychology and action. As Roller 77–83 has recently demonstrated in his analysis of *gratia* in *De beneficiis*, Seneca moves the focus of the socially binding practices of gift-giving, bestowing and returning favors from the act itself to the will of the agent. Seneca thus reevaluates human action and locates virtue in the psychological state behind the act, rather than in its success or failure. The act itself frequently is elided, as Roller points out 80, "...Seneca denies the significance of action, whether actual or projected, in the ethical category of *gratia*." In *Ep.* 120, however, Seneca advises Lucilius to shift his observations continually between the internal and the external: agent's psychology and the act itself (120.8–9). Lucilius must look for consistency and concord between the two.

¹³ Discussions of psychological fluctuation are numerous throughout Seneca's philosophy. *De tranq.* 1 provides a lengthy description of the difficulties that even a *proficiens* like Serenus faces in controlling his *animus*. Cf. also *De tranq.* 2.7 *intemperie animi*; 2.10 *animi volutatio*; 10.6 *his animi fluctibus*; *Ep.* 16.3; 23.8; 34.4; 35.4; 69.1.

urges Lucilius to play the spectator and consider his observations of people acting in all areas of life.¹⁴ In his closing description of the human condition, Seneca collapses the concept of actor and spectator.

Seneca begins this transition from describing how we developed the idea of the good to describing the imperfect, inconstant state of humanity by noting that “certain people” (*quidam*) continually change who they are. Such people constantly waver back and forth, following and emulating models which lie at opposite ends of the moral spectrum (“certain people are at times Vatiniiuses, at other times Catos” *quidam alternis Vatinii, alternis Catones sunt*), or they even try to outdo (*provocant*) their own exemplar: “and now Curius is not severe enough for them, Fabricius not poor enough, Tubero not sparing enough and content enough with cheap things; now they rival Licinus with wealth, Apicius with feasts, and Maecenas with pleasurable delights” (*et modo parum illis severus est Curius, parum pauper Fabricius, parum frugi et contentus vilibus Tubero, modo Licinum divitis, Apicium cenis, Maecenatem delicis provocant* 120.19). At first Seneca takes a severely condemnatory tone, stating that this inconstancy is the “greatest indication of an evil mind” (*maximum indicium est malae mentis fluctuatio... 120.20*). After quoting a passage from Horace, *Satire* 1.3 (11–17), Seneca begins to expand his discussion and specify who exactly these constantly changing people are. According to Seneca, many people (*homines multi*) are “never the same, nor are they even similar to themselves; and so they wander off into something contrary” (*numquam eundem, ne similem quidem sibi; adeo in diversum aberrat* 120.21). But Seneca soon corrects himself; he did not mean to attribute this condition just to “many people”; rather, it afflicts nearly all of humanity: *multos dixi? prope est ut omnes sint* (120.21). Everybody, Seneca says, changes their plans and wishes daily (*nemo non cotidie et consilium mutat et votum* 120.21). After this confession of the true state of affairs, Seneca then goes through a long list describing the sea-change that afflicts humanity, causing a continual shift from one extreme to another: “now he wants to have a wife, now a girlfriend; now he wants to rule as a king, now he acts so that there is no more dutiful slave...” (*modo uxorem vult habere, modo amicam, modo regnare vult, modo id agit ne quis sit officiosior servus... 120.21*). This pendulum-swing shifting of lifestyle choices reveals the underlying state of the *animus* and betrays its true nature: “thus the foolish mind (*animus*) is most clearly exposed: it shows itself first this way and then that, and, what I judge to be most shameful, it is unequal to itself” (*sic maxime coarguitur animus imprudens: alius prodit atque alius et, quo turpius nihil iudico, inpar sibi est* 120.22). Nevertheless,

¹⁴ On the role of spectatorship in the early Empire, see Bartsch; cf. also Nussbaum 1993: 136–49 for an analysis of Stoic “critical spectatorship.”

it is the duty of the Stoic to try to work towards the ideal of *constantia* and equanimity of psyche and action. Seneca describes our goal using a theatrical metaphor. We are to play one role: “consider it to be a big thing to play one human” (*magnum rem puta unum hominem agere* 120.22).¹⁵ While it is in the ultimate nature of the *animus* to remain equal and consistent with itself, only the Stoic sage is characterized by this psychological stability; the rest of us are inconstant and change our form (“except for the wise man no one plays one person, the rest of us are multiform” *praeter sapientem autem nemo unum agit, ceteri multiformes sumus* 120.22). Seneca expands on this metaphor and demonstrates the problem clearly and succinctly: “we continually change our masks and take up the one opposite from the one we just took off” (*mutamus subinde personam et contrariam ei sumimus quam exuimus* 120.22).¹⁶ Unlike typical stage actors, however, our goal should not be to have a full and ever-changing repertoire. For Seneca, virtuosity is not displayed by range of parts, but rather by consistency in one role. It is, as he says, a big deal to play one person (120.22). Seneca concludes this letter with an exhortation to Lucilius to strive for self-consistency: “therefore demand this from yourself, that the sort of person you decided to display yourself as, you continue to be up until the end; bring it about that you are able to be praised, or at least, that you are able to be recognized” (*hoc ergo a te exige, ut qualem institueris praestare te, talem usque ad exitum serves; effice ut possis laudari, si minus, ut adgnosci* 120.22). Not trying to play a consistent role, not trying at least to ensure that you are “recognizable” (*adgnosci*) risks an existential crisis. If you do not continually struggle to remain consistent, people will not even know who you are. As Seneca puts it in the letter’s coda: “with regard to that person you saw yesterday it might rightly be asked, ‘Who is this guy?’: there is so great a change” (*de aliquo quem hunc vidisti merito dici potest ‘hic qui est?’: tanta mutatio est* 120.22).

In this letter, Seneca acknowledges the infamous “theatricality” of the age of Nero.¹⁷ While Seneca admits that all those around him are as changeable as

¹⁵ Cf. Hijmans for an analysis of theatrical metaphors in Seneca; Hijmans 242 pays particular attention to the significance of the verb *agere* in Seneca’s philosophy.

¹⁶ Cf. Edwards 34 on the conclusion of *Ep.* 120. In this passage, Seneca seems to be expressing his own concept of the “persona theory”; cf. Cicero *Off.* 1.107–15; Epictetus *Disc.* 1.2.5–8. This passage in Seneca also denies the statement by the old Stoic Aristo of Chios that the wise man knows how to play many roles: he can be both Thersites and Agamemnon (*SVF* 1.351).

¹⁷ See Bartsch, Ch. 1, 2 on the concept of Neronian “theatricality”; Rudich provides an analysis of the age of Nero in terms of the “rhetorized mentality.” Rosenmeyer 47–52 discusses the theatricality of Stoicism in general.

stage actors taking up various roles, he sets this idea against itself. Seneca uses the “standard” image of Neronian society to make his own criticism of the age and generates a new idea from a familiar model.¹⁸ Seneca takes the love of theater, props, and behind-the-scenes changes and turns it into a portrait of consistency. From Seneca’s acknowledgement that people are actors, he creates a paradoxical category of *acting* consistently, always playing one role.¹⁹ Seneca thus unifies acting, the paradigmatic example of mutability and falsehood, and the Stoic ideal of *constantia*.²⁰ Throughout *Epistle* 120, Seneca creates links between actor and spectator, psychology and action. He tells Lucilius to *observe* the actions of those around him and consider the psychological condition and *impetus* that lies behind each act. At the same time as he is observing those around him and looking for examples of *virtus* lying behind their actions, Lucilius is to strive to give his own consistent performance. There is a continual movement between the internal and the external, as the goal of *constantia* consists of a unity of *animus* and action. At the end of *Epistle* 120 we can discern a series of oppositions that are united in Seneca’s concept of the self. Human action and acting are linked; authenticity and the mask (*persona*) are elided; acting is transformed into the ideal of acting consistently and “playing one person.” The quality of remaining consistent and being the same person is equated not with essence, but with a choice to give a continual presentation up until the “exit” (*qualem institueris praestare te, talem usque ad exitum serves* 120.22).²¹ After reading *Epistle* 120 the question still remains, how does one strive to achieve this level of consistency and play one role? Seneca only advises Lucilius, “demand it from yourself,” *a te exige*. He means

¹⁸ Cf. Elsner who argues that Neronian authors and Petronius, in particular, take an ironic, self-aware, and critical stance towards contemporary society.

¹⁹ As pointed out by Too 219–22, in the *Epistles* there is a contradictory slippage between ideas of movement and stability in Seneca’s metaphors for describing the state of the *sapiens*. This conflict comes out in the tragedies, too. Medea and Atreus in particular must *transform* themselves into their ideal, consistent selves. Self-transformation and *constantia* (“always being the same”) are intimately linked.

²⁰ This unification of opposites in *Ep.* 120 provides an important parallel to the tragedies.

²¹ It remains unclear if Seneca envisions an authentic “real” self for one to play. On the apparent shifting of authorial selves in the *Epistles* see Too 215–16; Edwards 33–4. In *Ep.* 120, playing one role is an act of choice (*institueris*), presentation (*praestare*, rather than *esse*) and performance (*unum hominem agere*). Despite the existential urgency with which this letter ends, Seneca takes away existential certainty. Remove the mask and an inner “real” human is not there; what remains is a choice to play one role. Yet this choice to remain consistent in one role, and the difficulties inherent in making and especially maintaining it, are at the heart of Senecan tragedy.

this literally. For Seneca, language creates a crucial link between psychology and action. A key therapeutic method to bring the external and internal into harmony is by telling yourself, or more frequently commanding yourself, to do so. Living consistently, playing one role, can be a linguistic practice.

Self-address lies at the core of Seneca's philosophic therapy; it is an important tool in the daily struggle to achieve consistency.²² Seneca proposes that if we tell ourselves how to act, we can (eventually) act in accordance with our words. We can witness the faith that Seneca put in this therapeutic practice in the opening of *De clementia*. Seneca begins this treatise claiming that with it he will not teach Nero anything new; this text is just a "mirror" to display the emperor's virtuous self to himself.²³ In reality, *De clementia* is an attempt by Seneca to fashion and construct Nero into a benevolent and philanthropic emperor. As with all authors of "advice to princes" Seneca knew that he could not simply tell Nero what to do; nor was it a simple matter of offering a logical argument and convincing Nero. Seneca was in a rhetorical and ethical bind: he had to get Nero to convince himself. Seneca's opening strategy to accomplish this task of creating an ethical emperor is to show in his text Nero talking to himself, telling himself of his virtue. Seneca thus puts words in Nero's mouth, words he envisions Nero saying to himself: *ita loqui secum* (1.1).²⁴ This monologue ends with Seneca having Nero declare (1.4):

...Severitatem abditam at clementiam in procintu habeo; sic me custodio, tamquam legibus, quas ex situ ac tenebris in lucem evocavi, rationem redditurus sim. Alterius aetate prima motus sum, alterius ultima; alium dignitati donavi, alium humilitati; quotiens nullam inveneram misericordiae causam, mihi peperci.

Severity is hidden away, but I have *clementia* at the ready; I thus watch over myself as if I were going to give an explanation to those laws which I have called from their place in the shadows into the light. By the young age of one person I am moved to grant clemency, by the old age of another; I have pardoned one because of his high standing; another because of his low standing; as many times as I have found no reason for mercy, I have spared for my own sake.

Except for perhaps the celebrated *Quinquennium Neronis*, Seneca failed in his efforts to create an emperor guided by *clementia* rather than individual

²² For a recent debate on whether Stoic philosophy in general is helpful as therapy, see Sorabji, with response from Williams; both are responding to Nussbaum 1994, especially Ch. 10. For a discussion of ancient therapeutic practices against *ira*, see Harris 362–90.

²³ As recognized already by Aristotle, panegyric must mask protreptic rhetoric *Rh.* 1367b35, 1.9.35.

²⁴ For a good overview of philosophical *Selbstgespräch*, Leo 111–12 is still helpful.

caprice. Yet the means by which Seneca tries to influence Nero at the opening of *De clementia* are significant to his overall philosophical project. Seneca's first move in this text is to have Nero talking to himself, telling himself about how mercifully he has acted and will act in the future. Seneca subtly suggests to Nero that this sort of monologue is a way to evaluate past and present actions, and, most importantly, to shape future ones. If Nero tells himself how wonderfully he acts, he perhaps will indeed act wonderfully. This connection between self-address and self-fashioning is a central concept of Seneca's philosophy.²⁵ As R. J. Newman demonstrates, the Stoics favored and perfected the practice of *meditatio*, a daily time set aside for self-investigation and therapy.²⁶ In *De ira*, Seneca recommends this practice as a means of combating anger. Seneca first gives the example of Sextius, who questioned his *animus* at the end of each day: "what evil of yours have you healed today? What fault have you prevented? In what part are you better?" (*interrogaret animum suum: 'quod hodie malum tuum sanasti? Cui vitio obstitisti? Qua parte melior es?' 3.36*). Seneca then offers a lengthy example of his own *meditatio* in which he scrutinizes his *animus* as well as his words and deeds. Seneca's *meditatio* bears a significant formal difference from that of Sextius. Seneca does not question himself. Throughout this self-investigation, Seneca continually *commands* himself to act better and without anger in the future (3.36). This therapeutic technique of self-correction through self-command is used throughout Seneca's tragedies.²⁷

²⁵ Cf. Edwards 31–2 on the "interiorizing" of dialogue in Seneca's *Epistles*. She draws particular attention to *Ep.* 26.7 and 27.1, where "Seneca presents himself as the addressee of his own advice" 32; cf. also *Ad Polybium* 9.1; *Ben.* 3.38.3; 7.2.2; 7.21.2; *Ep.* 8.6; 68.6–7; 94.46–8; 98.11–12. In *Ep.* 82.8–24 Seneca explicitly criticizes Zeno's syllogistic method for curing fear of death. Seneca cannot imagine the traditional Stoic techniques helping in a real situation. Significantly, he prefers short, pointed commands. Seneca argues that the fear of death can be cured, not through Stoic syllogisms, but with imperatival language.

²⁶ See Newman 1474–8, for discussions of *meditatio* in Seneca and the Old Stoics. Newman 1478–9, provides an excellent analysis of the rhetorical nature of the *meditatio*: "Because it must persuade, the *meditatio* is rhetorical by nature. The paradoxes, *sententiae*, metaphors, and other devices are not simply displays of rhetorical prowess on the part of the author; the very effectiveness of the *meditatio* depends on its ability to counteract ingrained false opinion." On the rhetoric of *meditatio* and the importance of repeating phrases to yourself in Senecan philosophy, see 1483–89; cf. also Hadot 125–6 on how Seneca's paratactic style explicitly aids repetition and *meditatio*.

²⁷ Imperatives in Seneca's *meditatio* (*De ira* 3.36–7): *vide ne istud amplius facias. . . ; noli postea congregi cum imperitis; vide; memento; recede longius et ride!; praesume animo multa tibi esse patienda*. In *De vita beata* 20.3–6 Seneca discusses the psychological importance of telling yourself how to act before attempting to accomplish great and difficult deeds: *qui*

Although it is in his tragedies that Seneca seems to be most interested in exploring the links between psychology, language, action, and *constantia*, Senecan philosophy does contain a paradigmatic example of self-command. In fact, Seneca's depiction of Cato the Younger's suicide speech in *De providentia* follows the exact linguistic form that I investigate in the tragedies. Seneca imagines Cato, sword in hand, acknowledging in a brief monologue the total victory of Caesar and declaring that he will now make his "exit": "Cato has a way out: with this one hand he will make wide the way to liberty" (*Cato qua exeat habet: una manu latam libertati viam faciet* 2.10). Before he performs this final act, which will perfect his image as the champion of freedom and Stoic autonomy, Cato apostrophizes his *animus* and twice commands it to act: "undertake, *animus*, this long planned deed; rip yourself from human affairs" (*aggrederere, anime, diu meditatatum opus, eripe te rebus humanis* 2.10). With this apostrophe, Cato "demands consistency from himself"; he orders his *animus* not to waver and to remain firm in his long thought-out plan and course of action (*diu meditatatum opus*). By the performance of this final act, Cato assures that he will continually remain the champion of liberty. Cato fashions himself and perfects his exemplary final image; he will be remembered and praised as "Cato," the Stoic model for generations to come. Of course, Seneca is putting words into the real Cato's mouth: the historical Cato's final words were not recorded.²⁸ But with this monologue, Seneca illustrates his own ideas of the links between language, psychology, and action.²⁹

Seneca continues to play with history and moves Cato's monologue into the realm of theater. Cato is performing on the world stage, and the gods are his approving audience. Seneca attributes Cato's unsuccessful first suicide attempt to divine intervention. He does not state that the gods wished to preserve Cato so that he would continue to fight for liberty; rather, according to Seneca, the gods so enjoyed watching Cato's performance of self-exhorting monologue and suicide they called him back for an encore. The gods want

sibi hoc proposuit: 'ego mortem eodem vultu quo avidam videbo. Ego laboribus, quanticumque illi erunt, parebo, animo fulciens corpus...' This lengthy self-address comes as a reply to the criticism that "philosophers do not do what they say" (*non praestant philosophi quae loquuntur De vita beata* 20.1). Cf. Nussbaum 1994: 425–6 on Seneca's *meditatio* in *De ira* and its relationship between internal and external, public and private.

²⁸ On the lack of historical evidence for Cato's dying words, and the subsequent tradition of creatively inventing them, see Tandoi 330–3, and Goar 38–9. "Cato's last words" became a standard declamatory exercise, which even the Stoic Persius cannot bear to remember reciting as a lad (3.44–7). Seneca, however, professes the philosophic value of such "standard" declamatory pieces: *De prov.* 3.1; *Ep.* 24.6ff.

²⁹ Goar 40 considers Seneca's dying Cato speeches to be protreptic devices.

Cato back to display his *virtus* in a more difficult role; they desire to witness his “famous and memorable *exitus*” again (*retenta ac revocata virtus est ut in difficiliore parte se ostenderet* 2.12). Cato’s monologue reveals the ideal form of commanding *constantia*. For Seneca, Cato cannot simply commit suicide; he must give a speech urging himself on.³⁰ In particular, the apostrophe and commands to his *animus* display Cato’s voluntary commitment to his plan of accomplishing this final and supreme act of self-fashioning. Cato’s actual suicide is minimized by Seneca, reduced to subordinate *dum* clauses (2.11). Rather, Seneca focuses on Cato’s (ahistorical) performance of a pre-suicide monologue that serves as a verbal externalization of Cato’s desire to act consistently. As the death scene is presented in *De providentia*, we are led to believe that this monologue of self-command, perhaps even more than the act of suicide itself, so entralls the gods that they make Cato perform his “more difficult” encore.

In the literary and rhetorical figure of self-address and command, Seneca saw the perfect illustration of Stoic *askesis*.³¹ Far from being “empty rhetoric,” in the Senecan *corpus* this figure is intimately involved with the workings of human psychology and the emotions.³² Perhaps Seneca recognized that this figure has specific ties to and could clearly demonstrate his philosophical ideas of the importance of self-address and -command for character formation. Seneca’s portrayal of Cato’s divinely approved first attempt at suicide does not simply glorify the act itself. Seneca’s admiration lies in Cato’s performance of psychological control, the performance of which is crystallized in Cato’s self-apostrophe and command. As Cato addresses and orders his *animus*, he steels himself and assures that he is psychologically ready to perform his most noble act.³³

In the Senecan *corpus*, the performance of virtue and the performance of vice are set in the same linguistic and imperatival terms. The exact figure of self-apostrophe and command that was employed by Cato is repeated throughout Seneca’s tragedies. In *Agamemnon*, *Thyestes*, and *Medea*, the

³⁰ Cf. also *Ep.* 24.6–8.

³¹ On the presence of self-address throughout the literary tradition, see Leo 1908, especially, 104–113; also Tarrant 1976: 194–5 for addresses to the *animus* and Greek equivalents; and Bonner 69 on apostrophe in declamation.

³² Cf. Gill 1983 on Chrysippus’ use of Euripides’ *Medea*’s great monologue as exemplifying Stoic theory of the passions and psychological conflict.

³³ Cato’s speech is at once related to ethics and aesthetics. Cato strives for the Stoic goal of *constantia*; the form that this declaration of intent takes, in particular his self-apostrophe and command, sets Cato within the literary and rhetorical tradition. On the links between ethics and aesthetics in philosophy, see Foucault 1984: 348, 352.

characters order themselves to plot and carry out criminal revenge. Through the use of this figure in his tragedies, Seneca explores the links between *constantia*, self-fashioning, control, and the “irrational” passions. Seneca brings together these opposites to expand upon Stoic ideas. His tragedies reveal how the passions are ultimately related to, and based upon, ideas of control and rationality. Seneca’s characters wish to commit the ultimate crime, to do away with the virtues and all forms of morality. From this angle, Seneca’s characters seem to be set in drastic opposition to any Stoic ideal. Throughout the plays, the characters’ own self-descriptions often reveal a lacerating psychological fluctuation and inconsistency that confirm standard Stoic ideas about the passions. Yet, Seneca’s characters are not simply antitypes; rather, they present a complicated and multilayered portrayal of the passions. Thus, while they appear to perform a transvaluation of Stoic values, and embrace *nefas*, vice, and the passions, this “transvaluation” is in fact set in Stoic terms. The means by which Clytemnestra, Atreus, and Medea achieve their goals are paradoxically based upon Stoic ideals of consistency and self-command. The implications of this fact are two-fold. On the one hand, Seneca’s characters remain parasitical upon Stoicism. Despite their declarations of “going beyond” all previous crimes, they cannot break free of the moral structures they wish to destroy. At the same time, however, the tragedies reveal that Stoic control and *constantia* contain the seeds of their opposite, the ideal of criminal self-control and consistency of vice.

As we turn to Senecan drama, we see that the problems, goals, and cures for his tragic heroes are the same as those found in his philosophy. Each character is afflicted by psychological wavering, conflict of commitment, and changes of plans and desires. By the end of the play, after a process of self-address and command, Seneca’s avengers—Atreus and Medea in particular—have achieved their goal of consistency and have fashioned themselves into “recognizable” figures. I focus on the “revenge tragedies” (*Agamemnon*, *Thyestes*, and *Medea*) because they contain the clearest and most graphic examples of characters working to remain consistent and to perform actions that they explicitly declare to be self-defining. Seneca’s complicated portrait of selfhood and *constantia* in *Epistle* 120, and his illustration of self-command in *De providentia*, can be read as analogues to his tragic figures. This is not to say that *Epistle* 120, or that Senecan philosophy in general, provides the “key” to Senecan drama. But, Seneca’s philosophic texts do provide us with a particularly important means of understanding the significance of a characteristic feature of Seneca’s dramatic language. Similar to the advice Seneca gives to Lucilius, his characters demand consistency from themselves and order themselves to play one role. The form that this demand takes is

self-apostrophe and command, and it closely parallels the language of Cato in *De providentia*. This is not to argue, however, that Seneca's philosophy is to be given a hierarchical preference to his tragedies, or that in his tragedies Seneca simply illustrates his theory of self-address and command in meter. Rather, the rhetorical connections between each body of work demonstrate that Seneca's tragic language offers both a means for understanding and a critique of his philosophic language.

Senecan characters fashion themselves through themselves, to paraphrase a term developed by F. Dupont.³⁴ This process of self-fashioning follows a consistent pattern that is known to Seneca's characters themselves. The process and the difficulties that lie behind quelling psychological *fluctuatio* are outlined by the ghost of Thyestes at the start of *Agamemnon*. The play opens with Thyestes' horrifying realization that he has returned to his ancestral home. It was in these halls that his brother Atreus killed Thyestes' sons and served them to him in a cannibal feast.³⁵ Now Thyestes urges his son Aegisthus to continue the familial cycle and take vengeance on Atreus' son, Agamemnon. At the end of this monologue, Thyestes addresses Aegisthus in order to assure him that playing the avenger is his proper role (48–52):³⁶

Causa natalis tui,
Aegisthe, venit. quid pudor vultus gravat?
quid dextra dubio trepida consilio labat?
quid ipse temet consulis torques rogas,
an deceat hoc te? respice ad patrem: decet.

The reason for your birth, Aegisthus, has come.
Why does shame weigh down your face? Why does your
trembling right hand waver with uncertainty? Why do you
take council with yourself, why do you torture yourself,
why do you ask whether this befits you? Look to your father:
it is fitting.

The play opens with a model describing the psychological difficulties that the characters will have. Thyestes describes the onset of conflicting feelings manifesting themselves both physically and mentally. Shame is immediately seen in the face; action wavers in the hand as the agent ponders various plans. Finally,

³⁴ Dupont Ch. 5: "La construction du héros par lui-même"; in her discussion of this topic, Dupont begins by focusing on the opening and concluding images of the characters on stage; cf. esp. 123–125.

³⁵ Atreus' own psychological preparation for this act of vengeance will be investigated below.

³⁶ The edition used is Zwierlein; translations are my own.

this conflict leads to self-introspection and self-questioning. The solution to this problem of psychological fluctuation regarding what action is fitting and proper (*an deceat*) is to look to a familial exemplar, which Thyestes commands his son to follow. This apostrophe encapsulates the difficulties that Aegisthus and Clytemnestra will in fact experience when they enter the play. Indeed Thyestes' description and exhortation anticipate Aegisthus's own entrance monologue and the words he directs to himself to rebuke his psychological fluctuation and urge himself on to action. This speech could easily be placed in Aegisthus's own mouth.³⁷ Despite these ghostly assurances of propriety of action from beyond the grave, both Clytemnestra and Aegisthus go through this process before taking their revenge.

In her initial monologue, Clytemnestra tries to convince and command herself to continue with her plans for revenge. Her speech follows the pattern outlined by Thyestes. First Clytemnestra recognizes her wavering resolve: "Why, my sluggish *animus*, are you seeking safe plans? Why are you wavering?" (*Quid, segnīs anime, tuta consilia expetis? / quid fluctuaris?* 108–9). She tells herself that the "better way" is closed to her; it is too late to play the chaste Penelope waiting at home. Nevertheless, as predicted by Thyestes, her thoughts turn to her *pudor*, as well as other concepts of virtue (108–113):

clausa iam melior via est.
licuit pudicos coniugis quondam toros
et sceptrā casta vidua tutari fide;
periere mores ius decus pietas fides
et, qui redire cum perit nescit, *pudor*.

The better way is now closed off.
Once you could have guarded your
chaste bed and your widowed scepter
with chaste fidelity; morals, law, honor,
piety and faith have perished, along with
shame, which once it dies does not know how to return.

After this explanation that all virtue has died for her, Clytemnestra then repeatedly commands herself to carry out her revenge and offers a series of examples to follow (114–124):

da frena et omnem prona nequitiam incita:
per scelera semper sceleribus tutum est iter.

³⁷ Both father and son use the vocative *Aegisthe* 49, 233, focus on Aegisthus's incestuous birth 48–9, 233, and base their apostrophes around a series of rebuking questions and commands.

tecum ipsa nunc evolve femineos dolos,
 quod ulla coniunx perfida atque impos sui
 amore caeco, quod novercales manus
 ausae, quod ardens impia virgo face
 Phasiaca fugiens regna Thessalica trabe:
 ferrum, venena—vel Mycenaean domos
 coniuncta socio profuge furtiva rate.
 quid timida loqueris furta et exilium et fugas?
 soror ista fecit: te decet maius nefas.

Loose the reins and, rushing forward, stir up all iniquity:
 through crimes the way is always safe for crimes. Plan
 now with yourself feminine tricks—what any faithless
 wife out of control with blind love, what a stepmother's
 hands, what the maid burning with an unholy torch, who
 fled the Phasian realm in that Thessalian boat dared:
 sword, poison—or secretly by boat flee the Mycenaean halls
 joined with your companion. Why are you timidly talking
 about hiding, exile and flight? Your sister did these things:
 a greater crime suits you.

The final two models for action in this series of exemplary deceit, the *novercales manus* and the “burning, impious *virgo*,” refer to Phaedra and Medea respectively. But, Clytemestra's first example of the “treacherous wife” (*coniunx perfida*) is harder to identify from the mythological tradition. In his commentary on the play, R. J. Tarrant notes the difficulty in making a positive identification. He remarks that Clytemestra is the prototypical *coniunx perfida*, and concludes that this passage seems to refer first to a generic exemplum and then ends with more specific ones (Tarrant 1976: 196 *ad* 117ff.). Several Senecan characters call on themselves to live up to their own traditional reputation. For example, in the *Troades*, Ulixes rebukes himself for believing Andromache's story of Astyanax's death and commands his *animus* to become full of deception and turn into the “total Ulixes” (*nunc advoca astus, anime, nunc fraudes, dolos, / nunc totum Vilxem* 613–14). Seneca's Medea famously takes her mythical self as a model and declares at the start of the play that she will “become” (*fiam*) Medea (171).³⁸ Given Senecan characters' penchant for mythical self-reference and -fashioning, Clytemestra may in fact be referring to herself here, ordering herself to get back into character and play her own role. Her opening monologue ends with echoes of Thyestes' opening psychological paradigm. She looks back to a familial model for guidance and tells herself

³⁸ This process of “becoming Medea” will be discussed at length below.

that it suits her to outdo Helen; greater crime befits her (*te decet maius nefas* 124). Clytemestra concludes with the same declaration of the propriety of revenge as the ghost of Thyestes: *decet*.

Clytemestra's command to plunge herself headlong into vengeance (*da frena et omnem prona nequitiam incita* 114) deserves specific focus. Clytemestra orders herself to be consistent with her self-image and her desires, which is typically an act of rational self-control. Paradoxically she uses this idea of consistency to give up control and act in accordance with her passions. The connection between more "Stoic" ideas of control and the paradoxical control needed for vengeance can be seen on a linguistic level throughout the exchange between Clytemestra and her Nurse. Just as Clytemestra orders herself to "loose the reins" (*da frena* 114) so her Nurse in turn commands Clytemestra to "give herself time" (*da tempus ac spatium tibi* 129). Echoing Clytemestra's opening commands to let go of the reins (114), the Nurse's final monologue begins by repeatedly ordering Clytemestra to "rein herself in" (*regina, frena temet et siste impetus / et quanta temptes cogita* 203–4). The linguistic and formal parallels between these two exhortations are significant. The language of control, exemplified by the Nurse, and Clytemestra's self-directed demands for "passion driven" revenge are the same: both are imperative.

In this scene we have a complicated, two-layered portrait of the passions. Between her opening and closing monologues, Clytemestra gives an extended portrait of her psychological conflict to the Nurse (131–144). She claims that her *pudor* is still "rebellling" inside her, that in order to continue with her plans for revenge she will go wherever *ira*, *dolor*, and *spes* carry her (142) and that she will "follow chance" (*casum sequi* 144). Here we have a standard, orthodox Stoic description of the passions as producing in the agent a volatile, inconstant state, which takes over and renders one unable to control her actions (cf. *De ira* 1.7; 2.3–4). The fluctuation and short-lived intensity inherent in the nature of the passions are clear, especially from Clytemestra's metaphor of clashing maritime forces (138–40). As Thyestes predicted in the prologue, the virtue of *pudor* still remains (138). Yet in tandem with, in fact bracketing this traditional description of the passions (cf. lines 141; 143), we have another, more complicated and problematic connection between the passions, rational self-monitoring, command, and the need to maintain consistency. As Clytemestra's opening and closing monologues make clear, she has not simply surrendered to the passions and released all control from her hands (*omisi regimen e manibus meis* 141); the process of the passions is not simply a matter of surrender and abandoning of restraint. In Seneca's tragedies, the passions require self-consistency and command. Although at one point Clytemestra describes her revenge as something irrational and out

of control, nevertheless, she requires a great deal of control and self-command to ensure that she carries it out. Clytemestra must command herself to remain consistent, avenge her daughter and kill Agamemnon. Clytemestra must develop a *constantia* of passion and desire for crime. She achieves this goal by self-command. At the same time, the Nurse's language of reason and control reflects Clytemestra's language. The Nurse commands Clytemestra to command herself. The language for both virtue and vice is imperatival; the difference lies in which direction one orders oneself to act.

Seneca continues to investigate this process in *Agamemnon*. Aegisthus enters the play repeating his father's opening exhortation to battle against his psychological conflict and look to his family history for a model for action (226–33):

Quod tempus animo semper ac mente horru
 adest profecto, rebus extremum meis.
 quid terga vertis, anime? Quid primo impetu
 deponis arma? crede perniciem tibi
 et dira saevos fata moliri deos:
 oppone cunctis vile supplicii caput,
 ferrumque et ignes pectore adverso excipe,
 Aegisthe: non est poena sic nato mori.

That time, which in my *animus* and mind I always
 feared, is truly at hand, the final moment for my
 affairs. Why do you turn back, my *animus*? Why
 do you lay down your weapons at the
 first attack? Be assured that the cruel gods are
 preparing destruction and a dire fate: set your
 vile life against all punishments, and meet
 sword and fire with your breast, Aegisthus:
 death is not a punishment for one so born.

Aegisthus's entrance monologue presents another crux concerning Seneca's tragic language.³⁹ Traditionally, scholars have interpreted Seneca's penchant for

³⁹ Still another crux here concerns the dramatic unity of this act. Why, after repeatedly commanding herself to kill Agamemnon does Clytemestra suddenly and inexplicably change her mind after Aegisthus's entrance monologue (*amor iugalis vincit* 239)? Tarrant 1976: 193, provides a full discussion of the connection between these scenes, "the sudden change of attitude is not depicted and so can have no dramatic reality. The proper conclusion appears to be that the Clytemestra-Nutrix dialogue and the following scene between Clytemestra and Aegisthus are presented by Seneca as independent dramatic units, each with its own sets of premisses which are made clear in the opening lines."

self-apostrophe as an unfortunate example of the excessively rhetorical nature of his plays and, more specifically, of how his tragedies have been corrupted by the influence of declamation. Indeed, Aegisthus's opening monologue is singled out as one of Seneca's literary low points. According to S. Bonner, Aegisthus's opening self-apostrophe descends *below* the level of declamation. Even the worst, most bombastic declaimer would never resort to saying, "why do you turn your back, o my soul?" *quid terga vertis, anime?* (Bonner 167).⁴⁰ Yet these apparent moments of bombastic self-address have a crucial importance for the characters *qua* characters. As each enters the play "declaiming" their psychological conflict, they are simultaneously commanding themselves to be consistent and play their roles. These repeated instances of self-address and command provide important revelations of the psychology of Seneca's characters, which can in turn be directly related to Seneca's philosophical ideas of *constantia*, and self-command. Through the repetition of the figure of self-apostrophe, Seneca investigates and expands these ideas in his tragedies. This "rhetorical" language is in fact the means by which Seneca portrays the relationship between action and the emotions.⁴¹

Ultimately, Tarrant takes an "analyst" viewpoint. Citing the connections between Thyestes' apostrophe to his son and Aegisthus's self-apostrophe, Tarrant 15–6, argues that the Clytemestra-*Nutrix* scene was written separately and added in later. Yet by this very repetition of opening monologues of apostrophe and command, Seneca appears to be investigating the process of self-shaping and the struggle for consistency of action and *animus*. Clytemestra's radical reversals can perhaps be related to Seneca's descriptions of psychological dissonance and existential uncertainty that conclude *Ep.* 120. Two other characters in *Agamemnon* address and command their *animus*. At the climax of the play, Cassandra orders herself not to fear the murder of Agamemnon (867–9). As she wonders what to do with her young brother, Orestes, Electra commands her *animus* not to fear the approaching stranger (915–6).

⁴⁰ Self-address in Seneca's tragedies has not received much critical comment. It is condemned by Leo 108 as simply the "overuse of a rhetorical figure." Boyle 1997: 18–19, offers a positive interpretation of Seneca's overall "rhetorical" and baroque aesthetic, but when he discusses self-apostrophe, specifically 157, he can only appeal to tradition, and calls it a "formula." In her recent study of apostrophe in Senecan tragedy, Billerbeck only treats address to mute personae, and does not breach the topic of self-apostrophe. Senecan self-apostrophe thus bears out Culler's (135–154) famous analysis of the critical "embarrassment" that apostrophe causes. As Culler argues, this figure is either ignored by scholars, or it is simply declared to be a "traditional" formal aspect of poetry, without paying attention to apostrophe's functional *significance* in a text.

⁴¹ Seneca himself seems to be aware of how dangerously close his philosophical writing comes to declamation. In *Ep.* 24 Lucilius criticizes Seneca for not providing philosophical help but rather declaiming old school-boy exercises and "narrating Cato" 24.6. Seneca, however, argues for the psychological value of remembering and repeating

Seneca's thinking about character formation and action remains consistent in both his philosophy and tragedy. In *Epistle* 120, Seneca takes images from the theater, links dramatic mutability with the Stoic ideal of *constantia*, and urges Lucilius to command himself to play one role, so in his tragedies Seneca joins his passion-afflicted and dissonant characters with self-command and consistency. Indeed, on a linguistic level, by the repetition of this rhetorical figure of self-apostrophe, Seneca draws his tragic characters together with the ultimate performance of Stoic virtue: Cato's suicide at Utica in *De providentia*. By these philosophical, thematic, and rhetorical connections, Seneca develops a portrait of the passions and of the psychology of vice that goes beyond basic Stoic theories of the passions as unstructured and inconstant; instead, he develops a new image of the passions built around the Stoic ideal of *constantia*. Seneca's characters do fashion and guide themselves through their knowledge of the mythical and literary tradition, but they also seem to have read and learned from Seneca's philosophy. The language that his characters direct at themselves displays an intimate knowledge of, and pathological delight in exploiting, one of Seneca's key philosophical ideas.

The importance of self-directed command in Seneca's philosophy is becoming increasingly apparent to scholars. B. Inwood has recently demonstrated that in his philosophical works Seneca explores the difference between "allowing yourself to feel something and commanding yourself to do so." (Inwood 2000: 53).⁴² As Inwood has shown, self-directed commands in Senecan philosophy are what come closest to the modern notion of an act of "will." He argues that in Seneca, acts of will power are "portrayed as self-directed commands issued in the pursuit of moral self-control and character improvement" (Inwood 2000: 55). According to Inwood, Senecan self-command isolates "a mental event that has an important, if not decisive, bearing on action and ascriptions of responsibility" (Inwood 2000: 54). In Senecan

exemplary monologues such as Cato's suicide speech. For an important discussion of the relationship between figures of speech and the emotions, see Vickers 15–6, 29. Quintilian provides an important analysis of self-apostrophe and command in a declamation of Junius Gallio: *dura, anime, dura, here fortior fuisti* 9.2.90; cf. Seneca the Elder *Cont.* 2.3.6. Quintilian states that the entire declamation hangs on this apostrophe. With it, the speaker, who is accused by his son of insanity, proves that he is sane. For an analysis of the psychology of this declamation, as well as the similar *Minor Declamation* 349, see Gunderson 118–129.

⁴² Inwood draws particular attention to the early *Consolatio ad Marciam* 8.3: *nunc te ipsa custodis; multum autem interest utrum tibi permittas maerere an imperes*. See also Inwood 1985: 56–66; Long 176; Long and Sedley 200, 318, for discussions of the importance of imperatives for the old Stoic psychology of action. Annas 96, however, argues against imperatives.

tragedy and philosophy, self-command can move from being purely a “mental event” to a literal, self-directed imperative—a fact that suggests Seneca’s own literary and declamatory tastes have influenced his theories of human psychology. As we have seen most clearly in Clytemestra’s descriptions of her psychology, it is precisely the key difference between weakly allowing yourself to follow a course of action and *commanding* yourself to follow it that Seneca investigates throughout his tragedies. Seneca’s tragic characters do not issue their commands to strive after “moral self-control,” but rather to pursue their unique combination of *immorality* and control. From these connections, we can gain important insight into Seneca’s conception of the nature of the relationship between the passions and action.⁴³ Similar to the Stoic process of self-shaping and *constantia*, the passions as presented in the tragedies require maintenance, monitoring and self-command. Clytemestra begins and concludes her opening scene with repeated commands to herself to remain consistent with her plans for revenge (108–24; 192–202). She may be afflicted by intense psychological conflict, yet she knows how to battle against it and cure her mental fluctuation.

Tarrant points out in his commentary on *Agamemnon* that Clytemestra’s and Aegisthus’s opening speeches are representative of a phenomenon that is evident throughout Seneca’s plays.⁴⁴ As Tarrant argues, Senecan “*irati* find that their passion fails them before the critical moment” (Tarrant 1976: 194 *ad* 108f.). They are afflicted by the psychological fluctuation and *displicentia sui* (cf. *De tranq.* 2.10) that is the “mark of a disordered personality” (Tarrant 1976: 194 *ad* 108f.). Senecan tragic figures are not to be placed outside of human experience, however; psychological instability and loss of resolve are not only the marks of *irati*—those wholly in the grip of passion. The actions, attitudes, and psychology that define Seneca’s characters are not mysterious and inaccessible. As *Epistle* 120 makes clear, psychological instability and *fluc-*

⁴³ In his philosophy Seneca does leave open the possibility that people can command themselves to act wrongly. In *Ep.* 99 he discusses two types of tears. The proper kind come uncontrollably at the shock of losing a loved one; the wrong kind are generated out of a desire for ostentation. This second, improper kind we *command* to fall: *permittamus illis [lacrimis] cadere, non imperemus* 99.16.

⁴⁴ Tarrant’s analysis of Clytemestra’s opening address to her *animus* has become a point of reference for commentators on several Senecan tragedies; e.g. Coffey and Mayer 101, 144 *ad Phaed.* 112, 592. Other commentators dutifully catalogue the parallels, Boyle 1994: 190; Töchterle 164 *ad Oed.* 35, 589 *ad* 933, 597 *ad* 952, 624 *ad* 1024; Hine 2000: 119 *ad Med.* 41. Citing *Med.* 895, Tarrant 1976: 195 cautiously admits that self-address and command may have philosophic significance, stating that with these apostrophes Seneca “may be alluding to the assent of the *animus* required to make an instinctive impulse...into a voluntary act.”

tuatio affect the entire spectrum of humanity. Although Seneca's characters do indeed waver and are beset by fear, *pudor*, and conflicting feelings, they all have the means to fight these psychological problems. They all dramatize Seneca's advice to Lucilius and demand consistency from themselves.

It is fitting that Thyestes in *Agamemnon* should know about the difficult psychological processes that lie behind the act of revenge. In his eponymous play, Thyestes falls victim to his brother's revenge, and the ultimate success of Atreus is predicated on his ability to master himself. *Thyestes* focuses both on the power and problems of mental command and self-transformation. At the conclusion of the play, we observe with Atreus the festal Thyestes as he unwittingly gnaws on his children's bones and drinks their blood. Atreus remarks that his brother is "unable fully to command his mind" (*nec satis menti imperat* 919). Nevertheless, Thyestes does try. The song Atreus watches his brother sing contains a lengthy series of commands in which Thyestes exhorts himself to transform and send away the "old Thyestes": *veterem ex animo mitte Thyesten* (937).⁴⁵ In the end, Thyestes realizes why he is unable to command himself into becoming the new and consistently happy Thyestes. Atreus has trumped him. Thyestes acknowledges the success of Atreus's controlled transformation. As he gradually reveals the full extent of his revenge, Atreus's true self is revealed and recognized by Thyestes (*agnosco fratrem* 1006).⁴⁶ In order to reach this goal, Atreus commands himself in a fashion similar to the younger generation of his family in *Agamemnon*.

In a recent analysis of *Thyestes*, Schiesaro notes that Atreus is firmly in control of the play. He argues that Atreus overpowers his brother Thyestes on several levels: Atreus is a master of language, has a cunning knowledge of the literary tradition, as well as a "deep understanding of human psychology" (Schiesaro 2003: 105). We have already seen Atreus's ability to observe

⁴⁵ Self-directed commands: *pelle, demitte* 935; *dolor* commands (*iubes*) him to act otherwise 942–4. In his *Consolatio ad Helviam* 18.9, Seneca also gives *dolor* an imperatival quality. Seneca offers advice to his mother: *quotiens te inmodica vis doloris invaserit et sequi se iubebit, patrem cogita*.

⁴⁶ The idea of self-fashioning as a process of creating a consistent and *recognizable* self lies at the core of Seneca's *Ep.* 31; cf. also 120.22. Letter 31 begins with Seneca's triumphant declaration, *agnosco Lucilium meum* 31.1, and continues with a command to Lucilius to continue with this psychological *impetus* (*sequere illum impetum animi*; cf. Medea 895: *sequere felicem impetum*). The goal of this letter is to demonstrate to Lucilius the link between psychological consistency, self-fashioning, and the divine, as Seneca makes clear by quoting *Aen.* 8.364–5. Similarly, by the end of the play, Atreus's consistency and recognition enable him to walk on a plane "equal to the stars" (885) and even be superior to the gods (*dimitto superos* 888).

and analyze the mental weakness that lies behind Thyestes' actions.⁴⁷ For Schiesaro, Atreus's psychological understanding is best displayed by his abilities to fathom Thyestes' true motives (Schiesaro 2003: 106).⁴⁸ Atreus knows that his brother will willingly come back to his ancestral lands because he wants them for himself. Thyestes' real desire is to rule and enjoy regal wealth and power; all of his claims of preferring a life of exile are false. Yet, Atreus's knowledge of human psychology extends deeper to include the workings of his own mind. Atreus's literary and linguistic knowledge extends to encompass Seneca's philosophy and tragedies. Like his dramatic counterparts, Atreus's use of self-directed commands becomes the primary means by which he is able to achieve his revenge. His knowledge of his own psychology and ability to use language in shaping and controlling it determines Atreus's final success and recognition.⁴⁹

Atreus's opening monologue is a study in the process of self-transformation via self-directed commands. Throughout Act 2, both in his opening monologue and his discussion with the Satelles, Atreus repeatedly commands himself to act consistently in his desire for revenge.⁵⁰ He enters the play de-

⁴⁷ Thus, Atreus seems ironically to fulfill the philosophical tenants of *Ep.* 120.4–14 where Seneca advises Lucilius to observe carefully the psychology and actions of those around him. See Davis 65–6, for an excellent treatment of how Atreus paradoxically fulfills Stoic ideals.

⁴⁸ Schiesaro cites, for example, *novi ego ingenium viri*... 199–204.

⁴⁹ In his reading of Senecan tragedy, Schiesaro 2003 (see esp., 2–3) employs Freudian and post-Freudian interpretations of literature and the unconscious. Cf. Segal for a Lacanian based psychoanalytic reading of *Phaedra*.

⁵⁰ The opening prologue seems to suggest that the irresistible force of the Fury is controlling the action of this play, commanding Tantalus to infect the house with madness 101–121. Nevertheless, like Clytemestra and Aegisthus, Atreus must progress through his own process of self-construction to ensure that he is able to command and control his passions in order to carry out his vengeance. A similar problem of the effect that the Furies have over the agency of Senecan characters comes up in *Medea*. At the end of the play *Medea* seems to hallucinate and envision the onset of the Furies and the ghost of her brother. Despite these hallucinations and visions, *Medea* continues to command herself to act and to perfect her infanticidal revenge. Indeed, even in her final "madness" *Medea* commands her brother to drive away the Furies 967–8, and "leave her to herself" (*mihi me relinque* 969). In Seneca's plays, it is only in *Her. F.* that we see the Furies blind an agent and cause him to act unknowingly. In the prologue Juno commands the Furies to drive Hercules mad. In this play, Seneca's portrayal of Hercules's murder of his wife and children (955–1053) reveals a type of occult, raving madness familiar in Greek tragedies as outlined by Padel 1992: 163–181 and 1995; cf. also Gill 1997: 218–21 for a discussion of the differences between "Greek-type" madness and Senecan "akratic self-surrender," which he demonstrates to characterize *Phaedra* and *Medea*.

scribing his current state both in terms of his action, (or rather, inaction *inulte* 178) and psychology. He rebukes himself for being weak, lazy (*ignave, iners, enervis* 176), and merely an “angry Atreus” (*iratus Atreus* 180). Although he is a self-described *iratus*, the simple presence of the passion *ira* itself is not enough for Atreus to accomplish what he ought to be doing (*debebat* 181) and what is fitting for him (*decuit* 183). *Ira* itself is not enough; Atreus requires a means to control his passion and transform it so that he can consistently move towards his goal of revenge. Atreus effects this transition from a state of *ira* and a desire for revenge by the continual commands to action (*age...fac* 192) that he directs at himself (192–196):⁵¹

Age, anime, fac quod nulla posteritas probet,
sed nulla taceat. aliquod audendum est nefas
atrox, cruentum, tale quod frater meus
suum esse mallet—scelera non ulcisceris,
nisi vincis.

Come, *animus*, do something which the succeeding
generations will not approve, but will never keep
silent about. Some unspeakable act must be dared,
fierce, cruel, the type which my brother would
prefer to be his—you will not avenge crimes unless
you outdo them.

Rather than being simply another example of Seneca’s over-the-top rhetorical bombast, self-apostrophe and command reflect important psychological

⁵¹ Self-address in Seneca’s tragedies has been a largely misunderstood topic. Rosenmeyer 177–81 provides an extended discussion and argues that in their monologues Senecan characters attempt to *deflect* language away from themselves. He notes of Atreus’s opening monologue, in particular 181: “Atreus’s first speech (*Thy.* 176ff.) starts with a rebuke to himself, and then, via the nominative *iratus Atreus*, glides off into directives addressed to a cosmic armed force that includes his own *animus* (192) as one of its soldiers.” Thus, according to Rosenmeyer, this peculiar brand of Senecan *Shreirhetorik* reveals the instability of the agent. Yet, as we have seen, self-address, especially when directed to the *animus* is the means by which Senecan characters attempt to fight their psychological fluctuation and achieve stability and consistency. Thus by addressing their *animus, mens*, passions, or even themselves in the second or third person, Senecan characters are not attempting to deflect agency and responsibility. In fact, the situation is precisely the opposite; self-directed commands to the *animus* or another psychological part lie at the very core of Seneca’s theory of agency and responsibility; see Inwood 2000: 53–5. Cf. also Gill’s 1996: 29–41 important re-evaluation of Adkins’ analysis of personal agency and impersonal verbs. Agency and responsibility are not determined by the mere presence of a first person verb or pronoun.

insights. As Atreus demonstrates, *ira* and a desire for revenge are not a sufficient means for action. Atreus must command himself; these self-directed commands allow Atreus to affect his own motivation and begin the transition from desire to action.⁵² By these commands Atreus begins to become who he wants to be: no longer the *inultus*, simply angry Atreus, whose desires and actions are not consistent with each other, but rather an avenged Atreus.⁵³

Medea provides the most complicated and extended investigation of self-command. Unlike Atreus, Clytemestra and Aegisthus, Medea's construction of herself as criminal avenger is a continual process of self-monitoring and exhortation that lasts through the entire play. In this play, we also witness Medea use self-directed commands in two opposed ways. Medea commands herself to maintain the vigor of her passions. Yet, unlike the other characters we have investigated, who only construct themselves through crime and strive to play a consistent role as avengers, Medea also commands her passions to subside and to "act better"; thus Medea appears, if only briefly, to command herself in a traditional "Stoic" manner and not in accordance with her passions. The conflict that lies at the heart of *Medea* can be traced to the opposing ways in which Medea commands herself to act. Medea's final triumph of "becoming Medea" is a hard won process that is ultimately both determined and jeopardized by the imperativ language that Medea directs at herself.

One of the most enduring and familiar statements about Seneca's Medea is Wilamowitz's claim that she has read Euripides' *Medea*.⁵⁴ Seneca's Medea

⁵² See Mele for discussions of self-directed commands 1987: 69–74; 1992: 286–7, and 1992: 292–3 on the links between desire and action in modern philosophy.

⁵³ Atreus's self-directed commands: 241–43 (with a demand to look to paternal models); 270; cf. also 505 and 507 as Atreus demands that his *ira* remain under control in order to carry out his plan. In this scene (491–507) as he praises himself for capturing his brother and nephews, Atreus reveals that his plan would not be successful unless he knew how to control his *ira* (*cum sperat ira sanguinem, nescit tegi— / tamen tegatur* 504–5). Atreus gives the idea of "restraining rage," to quote the title of an important, recent book on the topic (Harris) a new and paradoxical meaning. Self-address and command are also the means that Atreus uses to stop the psychological wavering and hesitation that afflict him as he perfects his plan for Thyestes' cannibal feast ("*animus*, why are you afraid again and subside before the deed? It must be dared, come on!" *anime, quid rursus times / et ante rem subsidis? audendum est*, age 283–4). Atreus must check and correct himself as he decides whether to make his sons Agamemnon and Menelaus privy to his crime ("you are acting badly, you retreat, *animus*: if you spare your own children, you also spare his" *male agis, recedes, anime: si parcis tuis, / parces et illis* (324–5). Once his plan is fully developed Atreus can proceed without any further psychological difficulty. The final figure of Atreus, the product of his own demands for consistency, is at last recognized (1006) and praised (885–9; 1096–7); cf. Seneca's closing advice to Lucilius in *Ep.* 120.22.

⁵⁴ Wilamowitz 162; recently discussed by Schiesaro 2003: 18.

indeed seems to be aware of her own mythical and literary history; she takes strength from and models herself on her own image. Yet, it is not enough that Medea promises she will “become Medea” (171) or that she draws on the simple power of her name (166–7; 567; 910). Like Seneca’s other characters, Medea’s real power comes from her psychological self-knowledge. She follows a fixed and specific process of self-monitoring and command to ensure her successful transformation into “Medea,” and more importantly, to ensure that she acts like and remains Medea. Well before her declaration to her Nurse of what she will become, Medea begins her path of self-shaping. Similar to Atreus, Clytemestra, and Aegisthus, Medea apostrophizes and commands her *animus* in her opening monologue. After calling on the gods to aid her in revenge, Medea turns from invoking divine help and directs her language at herself. She concludes with an extended series of imperatives, and orders her *animus* to regain its old power (40–3):

Per viscera ipsa quaere supplicio viam,
si vivis, anime, si quid antiqui tibi
remanet vigoris; pelle femineos metus
et inhospitalem Caucasum mente indue.

Through the very guts seek a path for
punishment, if you still live, *animus*,
if anything of your old power remains;
drive off feminine fears and cloak your
mind with the inhospitable Caucuses.

Medea concludes this opening scene by urging herself to act with rage and madness: “gird yourself with *ira* and prepare yourself with total *furor* for destruction” (*accingere ira teque in exitium para / furore toto* 51–2). Like her counterparts, Medea also declares that carrying out her criminal revenge is fitting and proper (“greater crimes suit me now that I have given birth” *maiora iam me scelera post partus decent* 50; cf. *Ag.* 52; 124; *Thy.* 183).

The ethical implications of Senecan self-apostrophe and command can be seen by comparing the nature of Medea’s imperatives in the opening monologue to those of her second speech. After hearing the opening chorus celebrating the wedding of Jason and condemning Medea to the “quiet shadows” (*tacitis eat illa tenebris* 114), Medea begins another lengthy monologue of self-exhortation. She directs her still-developing plans for vengeance specifically against Jason’s new bride (125–6). As she continues, Medea considers Jason’s actions more fully, and she begins to debate with herself the level of his responsibility for this new marriage. At first, Medea absolves Jason of all guilt and notes that he was powerless to act otherwise: “what could Jason have

done, since he was under the authority of a foreign judge and law?" (*quid tamen Iason potuit, alieni arbitri / iurisque factus?* 137–8). Medea immediately changes her opinion: Jason could have acted differently, and he should have killed himself rather than submit to this new marriage (138–9). Before she can finish, Medea cuts herself off, and, unlike Seneca's other avengers, she commands her passions, her *dolor*, to subside and to "speak better": *melius, a melius, dolor / furiose, loquere* (139–40).⁵⁵ For the moment, Medea absolves Jason of all guilt; the fault is entirely Creon's, thus the full force of her vengeance will be directed at him (*culpa est Creontis tota... / solus hic poenas luat* 143; 146). Of course Medea will not remain lenient for long, and the intensity of her psychological conflict can be documented in the commands she issues to herself. In addition, Medea's self-directed commands reveal the paradoxical nature of self-command, and psychological control in the tragedies. Medea uses the same imperatival language to shape and direct her actions, *animus*, and passions in two contradictory directions. Medea either orders her *dolor* to subside as she does here, or she commands herself to stir up the level of her passions and keep herself consistently along the path of "becoming Medea." We can follow this conflict, and the opposing nature of mental command, throughout the play.

In her analysis of *Medea*, H. Fyfe draws particular attention to the power of Medea's language. The other characters fear her speech and wish for her to be silent. Their fear is well justified. Fyfe points out that Medea demonstrates the objective power of her language through her magical incantation (Fyfe 82).⁵⁶ Through her magic spells, Medea is able to control the natural

⁵⁵ Cf. Andromache in *Tro.*, who commands her *dolor* to reveal (falsely) the death of Astyanax to Ulixes: *fatere quos premis luctus, dolor* 595. Seneca's nephew, Lucan, also develops this theme of *dolor*'s linguistic power and the agent's ability to command it. As Pompey is brutally stabbed to death by the minions of Ptolemy, he commands his *dolor* not to cry out in order to preserve his *decus*, both for his family and for the ages of Roman history to come *De bel. civ.* 8.621–35.

⁵⁶ Fyfe does acknowledge that Medea "uses her own speeches to build confidence and self-motivation," but according to her (79), the real power of Medea's language is "made more evident in her magical incantation (740–848)." Throughout *Medea*, Seneca brings ritual language and the language of self-command together, and he emphasizes the power and efficacy of the latter. Medea begins her opening monologue with a prayer to the gods and ends with commands directed at herself 1–55. After Medea's incantation and successful murder of Creon and his daughter, Medea must then monitor and command herself in order to discover still more extreme methods of punishment 895–905. As she prepares to kill her second child, Medea commands her *animus* with the ritual cry given at sacrifices, *hoc age, anime* 976; cf. 905. On this gruesome shift of ritual command to self-command, see Costa 120 *ad* 562.

world and indeed the entire cosmos. Medea herself is aware of this power and draws specific attention to the imperatival force of her words (e.g. "the home of the ancient grove has lost its shadows by the command of my voice" *memoris antiqui domus amisit umbras vocis imperio meae* 767).⁵⁷ Medea must not only use her language to control the cosmos, but she must also use her language to control herself.

Medea builds to her self-declaration by first recognizing her psychological instability. The initial success of her revenge causes Medea to react in shock. She is able to do away with any lingering traces of remorse and love for Jason (897), however, by a continual barrage of self-commands (*sequere* 895; *quaere* 898; *para* 899; *incumbe, excita* 902; *hoc age!* 905), culminating in her declaration of "Now I am Medea" (*Medea nunc sum* 910). Despite this apparent expression of self-fulfillment and completion, the specific nature of what it means to "be Medea" is not yet defined. The immediate difficulties inherent in defining herself and completing her revenge are revealed in Medea's commands to her *dolor*.⁵⁸ With the apostrophes that Medea directs to her *dolor* we see most clearly the dual nature of control and self-command that is developed in the tragedies. Medea first commands her *dolor* to develop and perfect her revenge, to continue being Medea the infanticide: "seek out the plan, *dolor*: to every crime you will not bring an unskilled hand." (*quaere materiam, dolor: / ad omne facinus non rudem dextram afferes* 914–5). Once she develops her plan to kill her children she reacts with horror. She realizes that her *ira* has left, and in place of an avenging wife, Medea the mother has fully returned (926–8):⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Cf. also 754 *evocavi*; 769 *nostris cantibus*. Significantly, Medea is the only one of Seneca's tragic characters who is able to command the universe around her. The others attempt to order the cosmos to react to their suffering, only to have silence be the response. Cf., e.g., after Atreus's revelation of his crimes, Thyestes' unheeded appeals to *Tellus* 1006–9, and the *caeli rector* 1077; see Rosenmeyer for a full treatment of the question of Stoic *sympatheia* in Seneca's tragedies.

⁵⁸ On the unity of passions and *animus* in Senecan tragedy, see Nussbaum 1994: 451–2. As Nussbaum points out several critics and translators have in the past been perplexed by the rapid shifts that Senecan characters make in naming their emotions. She argues that such passages "should not be normalized. For it is not surprising that love, anger, and grief are this close, if the Stoics are right about what the passions are. Medea's passionate love, her anger, her grief are all identical with judgments that ascribe high and non-replaceable value to Jason."

⁵⁹ Cf. Foley's 62–89, analysis of the great monologue of Euripides' Medea as encompassing a conflict between a masculine self and a "feminine, maternal self." For a comparison of the psychological aspects of Medea's final monologue in Euripides and Seneca see Gill 1987: 25–37.

Cor pepulit horror, membra torpescunt gelu
pectusque tremuit. Ira discessit loco
materque tota coniuge expulsa redit.

Horror has struck my heart, my limbs
grow sluggish with cold, and my breast
trembles. Anger has left its place, and
the mother has returned entirely since the wife
has been driven out.

Despite the fact that she initially declares the murder of her children to be “justly pleasing” and she prepares her *animus* to get ready to perform the *ultimum scelus* (922–5), Medea now denies that she could be one who could perform such an act. After she defines her psychological conflict (926–8), Medea apostrophizes her *furor* to act better: “Could *I* really pour forth the blood of my children and progeny? Better, ah better, mad *furor*” (*egone ut meorum liberum ac prolis meae / fundam cruorem? melius, a, demens furor!* 929–30). Medea debates these two positions, whether she should complete her revenge with the “ultimate crime,” as her *animus* continues to waver (*quid, anime, titubas?* 937). Her passions (*ira*, *dolor*) and her *pietas* successively put each other to flight (943–4). Finally, she appears to secure her position as *mater* by commanding her *dolor* to subside and yield to her *pietas*: *cede pietati, dolor* (944). As she did in her second monologue and at the beginning of this debate over possible “Medeas” and courses of action, Medea again commands herself to act better (to *dolor* 139–40; to *furor* 930). With this command to her *dolor* (944) Medea is attempting to fashion herself into someone who cannot kill her children but rather acts “better,” and in accordance with *pietas*, despite her anger and desire for revenge.⁶⁰

With these apostrophes, it is possible for Medea to construct herself into two diametrically opposed figures. She is either one who commits the *ultimum scelus* (923) or one who yields to her motherly duty and spares her children (929–30). The method she uses to fight her psychological impasse and bring about one of these two opposing ideas of “Medea” is consistent. In both cases she uses identical imperatival language. Thus, at the conclusion of the play we see that the process of “becoming Medea” (*Medea fiam* 171), “being Medea” (910), and then finally acting like Medea are all based around the same linguistic process. Indeed, as we have seen from Medea’s internal debate after her triumphant declaration of selfhood in line 910, what it specifically

⁶⁰ Thus, in stark contrast to Clytemestra and Phaedra, who explicitly state that the “better path” is closed to them (Ag. 109–113; *Phaedra* 177–80), Medea, at least briefly, feels that it is possible for her to spare her children and act in accordance with virtue.

means to be Medea is in no way fully defined. Seneca does not let this simple statement be the end of Medea's psychological fluctuation and continuing need to control herself and her passions. Seneca does not stop focusing on and dramatizing the difficulties of Medea's self-definition. It is not enough simply to declare "now I am Medea." In fact, as we have seen, it remains unclear even to Medea what exactly it means to "be herself." She must continually work to achieve psychological *constantia*, a unity of her psychology, her desires, and her actions. Seneca continues to couch this struggle for a consistent self in imperatival language. Here, Seneca displays the full complexity of the struggle for selfhood and reveals the paradoxically dual nature of self-command and control. Medea attempts to follow what she admits to be the better course by the same means that she devises and continues with her plans for revenge. Medea commands herself to act in *both* directions. Both types of action, criminal revenge, and acts of *pietas* require and are preceded by the linguistic act of self-directed command.⁶¹

Medea's controlled self, guided by *pietas*, lasts only briefly. As she calls her children to her and desires to kiss and hug them (945–951), Medea is unable (or unwilling) to control her *dolor*, her *odium* and the onset of the Erinyes (951–3). Instead of continuing to control her passions and ordering them to "yield to *pietas*," Medea apostrophizes her anger: *ira, qua ducis, sequor* (953). With this declaration she becomes set on infanticide, and wishes that she had born "twice seven" (*bisque septenos* 955) children, upon whom she could exact her punishment. From her description of herself as "following *ira*" and the ensuing visions of the Furies and the ghost of her murdered brother (958–66), it seems that Medea has surrendered to hallucinatory madness. Her actions are no longer her own, and she is fully in the grip of her passions and underworld powers. After her surrender to *ira*, visions of ghosts and the Furies, however, there is a shift in Medea's language. Despite this apparent "surrender" to madness, Medea must continue to monitor and command herself to ensure that she perfects her revenge. Medea moves from commanding her brother and the Furies to control her (965–6), to commanding her brother to drive off the Furies and leave her to herself (967–9). She orders her brother to "use her hand" as she draws her sword and kills the first child as an appeasement to his soul (969–71). From these lines, it would

⁶¹ Here Medea's language comes closest to Cato's in *De prov.* For further connections between Seneca's Medea and Cato, see Johnson 87–8. Mele 1992: 282–3 provides an excellent general discussion of the paradoxical link that exists between *akrasia* and self-control: "Some exercises of self-control apparently are not performed in the service of a better or best judgment." This certainly describes the nature of self-command for Medea, Clytemestra, Aegisthus, and Atreus.

appear that Medea has relinquished all agency.⁶² She is left alone in a state of hallucinatory madness and imagines that her infanticide is a way to assuage the guilt she feels for killing her brother.⁶³ Once Medea hears the sounds of the approaching Corinthians, however, her language shifts, and she directs her commands to herself (971–77).

Quid repens affert sonus?
parantur arma meque in exitium petunt.
excelsa nostrae tecta conscendam domus
caede incohata. perge tu mecum comes.
tuum quoque ipsa corpus hinc mecum aveham.
nunc hoc age, anime: non in occulto tibi est
perdenda virtus; approba populo manum.

What does this sudden sound announce?
Weapons are being prepared and they seek me
Out for destruction. I will climb the high rooftop
Of our house while the slaughter is still unfinished.
You come with me as a companion. I myself will
Also drag your corpse with me from here. Now
Do it, *animus*: your virtue must not be wasted
in hiding; prove to the people [the deeds of] your hand.

This inward shift of her language and return to a series of self-directed commands ensures that Medea will not simply complete her revenge, but also that she will perform it publicly. Her language urges her to “stay in character” (her final lines reveal that she is acting as she always does, *soleo* 1022) and display her *virtus* before the Corinthians (*populo* 977). While at the end of her final monologue Medea’s language shifts back to herself, at the same time it urges her out into the public sphere. Medea commands herself to display, demonstrate and perform her psychological control and her self-perfecting/defining act of infanticide.

As she prepares to display her so-called *virtus* in her final performance, Medea is still plagued by intense psychological difficulties. She first appears atop the palace before her audience and claims to have achieved the ultimate

⁶² A parallel to this command to be taken over by forces of madness can be found in the opening scene of *Her. F.* Juno commands the Furies to take her over and drive her mad first in order that they may later afflict Hercules with blinding madness. Juno rebukes herself and then addresses the Furies: *nobis prius / insaniendum est: Iuno, cur nondum furis? / me me sorores, mente deiectam mea / versate primam* 108–111.

⁶³ See Gill 1997: 215–218, on the development of Medea’s infanticide as motivated by guilt and as a means of self-punishment.

level of *constantia*. She declares that she has fashioned herself *back* into her original state as the virginal Colchian princess. By regaining her former self, she has never changed (982–6).⁶⁴ This regression and return to her original self appears to be enough. Medea tells herself to go now that her crime is complete (*vade, perfectum est scelus* 986); but she immediately catches herself and realizes that her revenge is not yet fulfilled. Instead of appearing briefly and quickly making her exit, Medea tells herself to continue on and perfect her vengeance as the crowd assembles: “go, your crime is complete, but your revenge is not: continue on while your hands are at it” (*vindicta nondum: perage, dum faciunt manus* 987). Just as Medea has not yet perfected her revenge, so she has not yet achieved psychological consistency. Her *animus* immediately begins to waver, and her *ira* begins to subside. She asks herself, “Why do you now delay, *animus*? Why do you hesitate? Has your powerful *ira* already fallen off?” (*quid nunc moraris, anime? quid dubitas? potens / iam cecidit ira?* 988–9). This time, in full public view, Medea must once again control her *animus* and passions to act as she desires. In this final instance of psychological wavering and hesitation, Medea does not, however, command herself to continue. Instead of the usual self-directed command, Medea reminds herself of the performance she is giving, and must continue to give, if her actions are to have any value. Jason must observe her: “this one thing was lacking, that spectator. I think nothing of the deed as yet: whatsoever crime we have done without him is wasted” (*derat hoc unum mihi, / spectator iste. nil adhuc facti reor: quidquid sine isto fecimus sceleris perit* 992–4).

In the final scene of the play, Medea’s self-display before Jason and the Corinthians links together two levels of performance: Medea’s criminal act of infanticide is immediately preceded by her public performance of psychological control. As Medea taunts Jason before she kills their surviving child, she apostrophizes her *dolor* (1016).⁶⁵ This brief apostrophe both incorporates and inverts her earlier commands to this passion. Only seventy-two lines earlier Medea commanded her *dolor* to yield to her *pietas*, to act virtuously (*cede pietati, dolor* 944). Here Medea checks her *dolor* so that she does not

⁶⁴ Cf. Schiesaro 2003: 208–214, for an analysis of the theme of regression, and the obsession with recapturing the past that dominates Medea.

⁶⁵ Self-apostrophe and command immediately before action: in *Ag.* both Cassandra 867–71 and *Electra* 913–17, order themselves to change their disposition and not feel fear in the immediate situation. Perhaps the finest example of a Senecan character ordering herself immediately before acting is *Phaedra*’s aside after she returns to consciousness and orders herself to confess to *Hippolytus* 592–9. For an important discussion of the post-classical development of the technique of aside, and of Seneca’s general differences from fifth century Attic tragedy, see Tarrant 1978: 242–6.

rush to act and can give a controlled performance of her crime: “fully and slowly enjoy the crime; do not hasten on *dolor*” (*perfruire lento scelere, ne propera, dolor* 1016). With this final, paradoxical act of self-control, Medea has successfully fashioned herself into the avenging character she promised to become at the start of the play. She quickly rebukes Jason’s demand that she kill him instead (1018) and stabs her child in final appeasement of her *dolor* (1019–20). With this public performance of (passion-) control and revenge, Medea surpasses even Atreus. Despite the praise he heaps on himself at the end of *Thyestes*, Atreus laments that he did not perform his revenge publicly before the victims. Unlike Medea, who ends by commanding herself not to complete her act too hastily, Atreus regrets that he rushed along; he was not fully in control of his passions and thus cheated them (1054–7; cf. *Medea* 1016: *ne propera, dolor*):

ex vulnere ipso sanguinem calidum in tua
defundere ora debui, ut viventium
biberes cruorem—verba sunt irae data
dum *propero*.

From the very wound I ought to have
poured the hot blood into your mouth,
so that you might drink the blood of the
living—my *ira* was deceived while I
hastened on.

Although she must command herself, often in conflicting directions, throughout the play, in the end Medea gives a superior performance of psychological control and revenge. As Medea prepares to exit, she demands that Jason observe and recognize her: “lift up your swollen eyes, ungrateful Jason. Do you recognize your wife?” (*lumina huc tumida alleva, / ingrata Iason. coniugem agnoscis tuam?* 1020–21). Her question is reminiscent of Thyestes’ terrible realization and reply to Atreus’s revelation of the remainder of his children’s bodies: “I recognize my brother” (*Agnosco fratrem* 1006). *Thyestes* and *Medea* end with the avenging characters being recognized by their victim/audience. For both Medea and Atreus, this final recognition is the result of their successful ability to demand consistency of psyche and action from themselves.

In *Agamemnon*, *Thyestes*, and *Medea*, a series of oppositions are juxtaposed and ultimately united: mind and action; psychological control and the irrational passions; *constantia* and crime; allowing action versus commanding it. This paradoxical unity is based on the “rhetorical” language of self-apostrophe and command. Through the continual repetition of apostrophe, Seneca provides a sustained investigation of the springs of his characters’ self-creation,

self-monitoring, and action. The process of striving for consistency through self-address and command is based on Seneca's ideas of how humans act and how they come into being. Thus Seneca brings together his final dichotomy: philosophy and tragedy. *Agamemnon*, *Thyestes*, and *Medea* give a holistic view of Seneca's philosophic ideas of psychology, consistency, and selfhood. In these tragedies, the psychology of vice is dissected and shown to be no different from "rational" psychology and action. *Furor*, *ira*, *dolor*, madness, and the passions are not simply irrational, out of control, mysteriously inexplicable forces. Each of Seneca's characters must maintain their passions, and this maintenance follows a specific process of self-monitoring and linguistic performance. The language of virtue and vice, control of the passions and "rational" Stoic self-control and *constantia* does not vary between Seneca's philosophy and tragedy. Both are based around self-address and command.⁶⁶ In his tragedies Seneca is neither negating, inverting, nor denying his philosophical ideals; rather, he is expanding them.⁶⁷ He renders vice, *nefas*, and *scelera* part of his known and mapped psychological territory. Despite their claims of outdoing all former crimes and their desire to surpass all others in evil, Seneca's characters can only become who they are and act in accordance with their desires by following a fixed and defined process of psychological self-monitoring and command.⁶⁸ They cannot step outside of this linguistic system of Stoic self-creation as they struggle for criminal perfection and psychological consistency of vice. As they urge themselves on to vengeance, Medea, Atreus, Clytemestra, and Aegisthus all use the same rhetorical self-apostrophe and imperatival language as Cato, Seneca's ultimate Stoic exemplar. Seneca's characters depend on Stoicism to achieve their goals, but through their repetition of Stoic forms and language, Seneca's characters also create a deadly new category that links vice with *constantia*. It is at these moments, where his characters seem to be at their

⁶⁶ On this unity of virtue and vice, see Braden 1970: 14 n.3: "The dramatic point is not that good people think this way and bad ones think that way, but that everyone in sight is thinking much the same way, and there is this result. Hence Hercules can perform as both hero and villain without appreciably changing his personality."

⁶⁷ See Dingel 1974 for a classic statement of the argument that Senecan tragedy "negates" Senecan philosophy. More recently, Schiesaro 1997: 109–11 argues for the "impossibility of Stoic tragedy."

⁶⁸ Greenblatt 210 describes a similar phenomenon at work in Christopher Marlowe's Seneca-influenced plays. Marlowe's characters cannot escape the system against which they are rebelling; and hence they can only repeat and reinforce its structures: "Marlowe's protagonists rebel against orthodoxy, but they do not do so just as they please; their acts of negation not only conjure up the order they would destroy but seem at times to be themselves conjured up by that very order." For an excellent analysis of Seneca in the Renaissance see Braden 1985.

most bombastic and theatrical, that Seneca performs a probing analysis of the possibilities of Stoicism and human psychology.

WORKS CITED

- Annas, J. 1992. *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind*. Berkeley.
- Armisen-Marchetti, M. 1989. *Sapientiae Facies: étude sur les images de Sénèque*. Paris.
- Bartsch, S. 1994. *Actors in the Audience: Theatricality and Doublespeak From Nero to Hadrian*. Cambridge.
- Billerbeck, M. 1998. "Apostrophes de rôles muets et changements implicites d'interlocuteur: Deux observations sur l'art dramatique de Sénèque." *Pallas* 49: 101–10.
- Bonner, S. F. 1949. *Roman Declamation in the Late Republic and Early Empire*. Liverpool.
- Boyle, A. J., ed. 1994. *Seneca's Troades*. Leeds.
- . 1997. *Tragic Seneca: An Essay in the Theatrical Tradition*. New York.
- Braden, G. 1970. "The Rhetoric and Psychology of Power." *Arion* 9: 5–41.
- . 1985. *Renaissance Tragedy and the Senecan Tradition: Anger's Privilege*. New Haven.
- Coffey, M. and R. Mayer, eds. 1990. *Seneca: Phaedra*. Cambridge.
- Costa, C. D. N., ed. 1973. *Seneca: Medea*. Oxford.
- Culler, J. 1981. *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, and Deconstruction*. Ithaca.
- Davis, P. J. 2003. *Seneca: Thyestes*. London.
- Dickey, Eleanor. 1996. *Greek Forms of Address: From Herodotus to Lucian*. Oxford.
- Dingel, J. 1974. *Seneca und die Dichtung*. Heidelberg.
- Dupont, F. 1995. *Les monstres de Sénèque: pour une dramaturgie de la tragédie romaine*. Paris.
- Edwards, C. 1997. "Self-Scrutiny and Self-Transformation in Seneca's Letters." *G&R* 44: 23–28.
- Elsner, J. 1993. "Seductions of Art: Encolpius and Eumolpus in a Neronian Picture Gallery." *PCPS* 39: 30–47.
- Foley, H. 1989. "Medea's Divided Self." *CA* 8: 61–85.
- Foucault, M. 1984. *The Foucault Reader*. Paul Rainbow, ed. New York.
- . 1985. *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality, Volume 2*. Robert Hurley, trans. New York.
- . 1986. *The Care of the Self: The History of Sexuality, Volume 3*. Robert Hurley, trans. New York.
- Fyfe, H. 1983. "An Analysis of Seneca's *Medea*." In A. J. Boyle, ed., *Seneca Tragicus: Ramus Essays on Senecan Drama*. Berwick. 77–93.
- Gill, C. 1983. "Did Chrysippus Understand Medea?" *Phronesis* 28: 136–49.
- . 1987. "Two Monologues of Self-Division: Euripides *Medea* 1021–80 and Seneca *Medea* 893–977." In M. Whitby, P. Hardie and M. Whitby, eds., *Homo Viator: Classical Studies for John Bramble*. Bristol. 25–37.
- . 1996. *Personality in Greek Epic, Tragedy and Philosophy: The Self in Dialogue*. Oxford.

- . 1997. "Passion as Madness in Roman Poetry." In S. Braund and C. Gill, eds., *The Passions in Roman Thought and Literature*. Cambridge. 213–241.
- Goar, R. J. 1987. *The Legend of Cato Uticensis From the First Century B.C. to the Fifth Century A.D.* Brussels.
- Goldberg, S. M. 1997. "Melpomene's Declamation (rhetoric and tragedy)." In W. Dominik, ed., *Roman Eloquence: Rhetoric in Society in Literature*. New York. 166–81.
- Greenblatt, S. 1980. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Chicago.
- Gunderson, E. 2003. *Declamation, Paternity, and Roman Identity: Authority and the Rhetorical Self*. Cambridge.
- Hadot, I. 1969. *Seneca und die griechisch-römische Tradition der Seelenleitung*. Berlin.
- Harris, W. V. 2001. *Restraining Rage: The Ideology of Anger Control in Classical Antiquity*. Cambridge.
- Hine, H. H., ed. 2000. *Seneca: Medea*. Warminster.
- Hijmans, B. L. 1966. "Drama in Seneca's Stoicism." *TAPA* 97: 237–51.
- Inwood, B. 1985. *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism*. Oxford.
- . 1993. "Seneca and Psychological Dualism." In J. Brunschwig and M. Nussbaum, eds., *Passions and Perceptions: Studies in Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind: Proceedings of the Fifth Symposium Hellenisticum*. Cambridge. 150–183.
- . 2000. "The Will in Seneca the Younger." *CP* 95: 44–60.
- Johnson, W. R. 1988. "Medea nunc sum: The Close of Seneca's Version." in P. Pucci, ed., *Language and the Tragic Hero: Essays on Greek Tragedy in Honor of Gordon M. Kirkwood*. Atlanta. 85–101.
- Leo, F. 1908. *Der Monolog im Drama: ein Beitrag zur griechisch-römischen Poetik*. Berlin.
- Long, A. A. 1986. *Hellenistic Philosophy: Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics*. Berkeley.
- Long, A. A. and Sedley, D., eds. 1987. *The Hellenistic Philosophers*. Vol. 2. Cambridge.
- Mele, A. 1987. *Irrationality: An Essay on Akrasia, Self-Deception and Self-Control*. Oxford.
- . 1992. "Akrasia, Self-control, and Second-Order Desires." *Noûs* 26: 281–302.
- Motto, A. L. 2001. *Further Essays on Seneca*. Frankfurt am Main.
- Newman, R. J. 1989. "Cotidie Meditare. Theory and Practice of the *Meditatio* in Imperial Stoicism." *ANRW* 36.3: 1473–1517.
- Nussbaum, M. C. 1993. "Poetry and the Passions: Two Stoic Views." In J. Brunschwig and M. Nussbaum, eds., *Passions and Perceptions: Studies in Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind: Proceedings of the Fifth Symposium Hellenisticum*. Cambridge. 97–149.
- . 1994. *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*. Princeton.
- Padel, R. 1992. *In and Out of Mind: Greek Images of the Tragic Self*. Princeton.
- . 1995. *Whom Gods Destroy: Elements of Greek and Tragic Madness*. Princeton.
- Reynolds, L. D., ed. 1965. *L. Annaei Senecae: Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*. Oxford.
- . 1977. *L. Annaei Senecae: Dialogorum Libri Duodecim*. Oxford.
- Roller, M. B. 2001. *Constructing Autocracy: Aristocrats and Emperors in Julio-Claudian Rome*. Princeton.
- de Romilly, J. 1984. "Patience mon Coeur": l'essor de la psychologie dans la littérature grecque classique. Paris.

- Rosenmeyer, Thomas. 1989. *Senecan Drama and Stoic Cosmology*. Berkeley.
- Rudich, V. 1997. *Dissidence and Literature under Nero: The Price of Rhetoricization*. New York.
- Schadewaldt, W. 1926. *Monolog und Selbstgespräch: Untersuchungen zur Formgeschichte der griechischen Tragödie*. Berlin.
- Schiesaro, A. 1994. "Seneca's *Thyestes* and the Morality of Tragic *Furor*." In J. Elsner and J. Masters, eds., *Reflections of Nero: Culture, History and Representation*. Chapel Hill. 196–210.
- . 1997. "Passion, Reason and Knowledge in Seneca's Tragedies." In S. Braund and C. Gill, eds., *The Passions in Roman Thought and Literature*. Cambridge. 89–111.
- . 2003. *The Passions in Play: Thyestes and the Dynamics of Senecan Drama*. Cambridge.
- Schofield, M. 2003. "Stoic Ethics." In B. Inwood, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*. Cambridge. 233–56.
- Segal, C. 1986. *Language and Desire in Seneca's Phaedra*. Princeton.
- Sharples, R. W. 1983. "But Why Has My Spirit Spoken With Me Thus?": Homeric Decision Making." *G&R* 30: 1–7.
- Shattuck, R. 1996. *Forbidden Knowledge: From Prometheus to Pornography*. New York.
- Sorabji, R. 1997. "Is Stoic Philosophy Helpful as Psychotherapy?" In R. Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle and After*. London. 197–209.
- Striker, G. 1991. "Following Nature: A Study in Stoic Ethics." *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 9: 1–73.
- Tandoi, V. 1965. "Morituri Verba Catonis." *Maia* 17: 315–339.
- Tarrant, R. J., ed. 1976. *Seneca Agamemnon*. Cambridge.
- . 1978. "Senecan Drama and its Antecedents." *HSCP* 82: 213–263.
- . 1985. *Seneca's Thyestes*. Atlanta.
- Taylor, C. 1989. *The Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*. Cambridge.
- Tietze, V. 1987. "The Psychology of Uncertainty in Senecan Tragedy." *ICS* 12: 135–41.
- Töchterle, K., ed. 1994. *Lucius Annaeus Seneca: Oedipus*. Heidelberg.
- Too, Y. L. 1994. "Educating Nero: a Reading of Seneca's *Moral Epistles*." In J. Elsner and J. Masters, eds., *Reflections of Nero: Culture, History and Representation*. Chapel Hill: 211–224.
- Turner, V. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Antistructure*. Chicago.
- Viansino, G., ed. 1993. *Lucio Anneo Seneca: Teatro*. Milan.
- Vickers, B., ed. 1982. *Rhetoric Revalued: Papers from the International Society for the History of Rhetoric*. Binghamton.
- von Wilamowitz-Mollendorff, U. 1919. *Griechische Tragödien* vol. 3. Berlin.
- Williams, B. 1997. "Stoic Philosophy and the Emotions: Reply to Richard Sorabji." in R. Sorabji, ed., *Aristotle and After*. London: 211–13.
- Zwierlein, O., ed. 1986. *L. Annaei Senecae: Tragoediae*. Oxford.